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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PRAGUE 001572

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [EZ](#) [EUN](#)

SUBJECT: CZECHS ON NOV 7 GAERC

REF: A. STATE 198361

[1](#)B. STATE 201513

[1](#)C. HAVANA 21834

Classified By: Poloff Sarah C. Peck for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary. The Czechs support tough measures against Syria, Belarus, and Cuba, but do not have the full support of their EU partners. On Iraq, the Czechs will continue their mission independent of any EU mission. In the Balkans, Czechs support the open door policy. However, due to enlargement fatigue, the EU is likely to beckon new candidates with one hand, while gently holding them back with the other. On a separate note, the Czechs urged Washington to make GAERC demarches more effective by delivering them to EU member states at least a week earlier in the process. End summary.

[1](#)2. (C) Pol-Econ Chief and Poloff met on Nov. 2 with Petr Kaiser, Director of the Czech MFA's CFSP Department, to discuss the Nov 7 GAERC. They also met separately on Nov. 3 with Miloslav Stasek, Director of the MFA Middle East and Africa Department, and Edita Hrda, Director of the MFA Americas Desk. As summarized below, the discussion primarily focused on the Middle East, Belarus, the Balkans, Cuba, and the China arms embargo.

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The Middle East  
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[1](#)3. (C) On Iraq, Kaiser said the FMs will discuss how the EU should support the current mission there. Kaiser predicted EU involvement will be limited to capacity building, rather than to military operations. He confirmed the Czechs will continue their current efforts in Iraq independent of an EU mission. With respect to timing, Kaiser said some EU countries think any EU commitment must wait until after the election of the new Iraqi government. The Czechs agree, but nevertheless think it is necessary to prepare in advance of the election. He noted the Czechs would welcome suggestions from the U.S. on possible EU missions. (Separately, Stasek noted that FM Svoboda is planning to visit Iraq early next year, after the December elections.)

[1](#)4. (C) On Syria, Kaiser expects the FMs will agree (as do the Czechs) that Syria must cooperate on the investigation into the assassination of former PM Hariri, and that the international community should not engage with Syria until it does so. However, on the question of Syria's invitation to the Barcelona Anniversary Summit, Kaiser said the EU will not agree to withdraw the invitation because it would not be feasible in light of the complicated rules of the EU (an opinion shared by Stasek).

[1](#)5. (C) On the Middle East peace process, the EU has a concrete proposal to provide training for both Israeli and Palestinian police (COPPS). The focus is security enhancement, and Kaiser felt the proposal would have traction within the EU.

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Belarus  
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[1](#)6. (C) Turning to Belarus, Kaiser said the Czechs raised at the EU working group the U.S. proposal that the EU should tell Lukashenko not to run in the presidential election. However, the Czech Republic was the only country in support of the proposal. The Czechs also support political &sanctions8 for Belarus, such as denying visas for senior GOB officials.

[1](#)7. (C) Kaiser said the Czechs want the EU to find a way to provide EU funding to civil society in Belarus (and not just through GOB channels) so that opposition groups can actually benefit. In line with this view, the Czechs will urge the EU to invite Belarusian opposition leader, Alexandr Milinkievich, to Brussels to explain what he needs. According to the Czechs, it is important for the EU to signal to opposition leaders that they have not been forgotten.

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The Balkans  
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18. (C) On Macedonia, Kaiser said the EU is likely to try to slow the integration process for two reasons: enlargement fatigue, and Greek opposition. Any efforts made will be in the broader context of Serbia and Croatia integration. The FMs will focus on fostering stability in the region.

19. (C) The status of Kosovo is still on the table. The EU focus is on meeting standards first, then on status. Because Kosovo has not fully realized its goals for reform (although there has been progress), the question of status is premature. Therefore, the EU will continue to pressure Kosovo to meet the standards. Kaiser also acknowledged that the question of status is not just an EU question -- the international community, including the U.S., will need to be involved. Regarding this last point, Kaiser emphasized the importance of the international community working closely with Belgrade, as any change in Kosovo's status will be viewed as a loss.

10. (C) Kaiser said Croatia remains a hard issue that is still being considered by the EU. Kaiser noted that the EU's general language of support for Croatia integration is a far cry from the concrete language on requirements that need to be met. He also said the Austrians, not the Czechs, pushed for Croatia at the Oct 3 GAERC meeting.

11. (C) On EU enlargement generally, Kaiser said the Czechs (as a new member state) will continue to support the open door policy, so long as the candidate country in question fulfills all conditions set.

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Cuba  
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12. (C) Kaiser said, and Hrda confirmed, that the Czechs are angry with the GOC over the National Day incident in Havana (ref tel C). On November 1, 2005, the Czech MFA called the Cuban Charge d'Affaires in to denounce the actions taken by Cuban authorities. Czechs plan to ask the EU to take action against the GOC under the EU solidarity clause. Kaiser said Deputy FM Mueller (sitting in for FM Svoboda) will raise the issue at the FM lunch on Monday, Nov. 7, because it was too late to get the issue into the GAERC conclusion. Hrda said the Czechs will raise the issue formally at the next GAERC meeting, and are planning to take further action against Cuba at the EU level, bilaterally, and in Havana (further details septel).

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The Czechs suggest delivering GAERC demarches earlier  
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13. (SBU) Kaiser said the Czechs appreciate receiving U.S. demarches on upcoming GAERC meetings. Unfortunately, the demarches arrive after the work of the EU working groups has been completed. Because these groups conclude their work two weeks before the GAERC meeting, he said that, for maximum effect, the U.S. should send its demarches at least three weeks prior to the date of the GAERC meeting (and posts should, of course, deliver them promptly).  
CABANISS